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WEEKLY SUMMARY

Significant Trends

Soviet Propaganda Attacks on the US and UK 1

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Soviet Propaganda Attacks on the US and UK

Increasing Soviet propaganda attacks on the United States and Britain reached a high point this week in the Moscow press denunciation of Secretary Bevin's 4 June foreign policy speech. Bevin was accused of making "psychological preparation for complete withdrawal from the established principles of Allied cooperation," and of using "pressure and threat" to force Soviet acceptance of Anglo-American proposals at the coming Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers. Similar Soviet accusations have recently been made against US foreign policy.

The immediate tactical purpose of the current Soviet campaign is twofold: to exert pressure on Bevin and Secretary Byrnes, by convincing the British and American people that present Anglo-American policy may lead to a break with the USSR; to prepare Soviet and foreign opinion for a possible break-down of the Paris Conference, by placing the blame in advance on the Western Powers. An additional motive for accusing the Anglo-Americans of preparing for "withdrawal from . . . Allied cooperation" may be to prepare world opinion for unilateral Soviet action in areas of Allied disagreement, on the ground that the Western Powers themselves have already abandoned cooperation in favor of "pressure tactics."

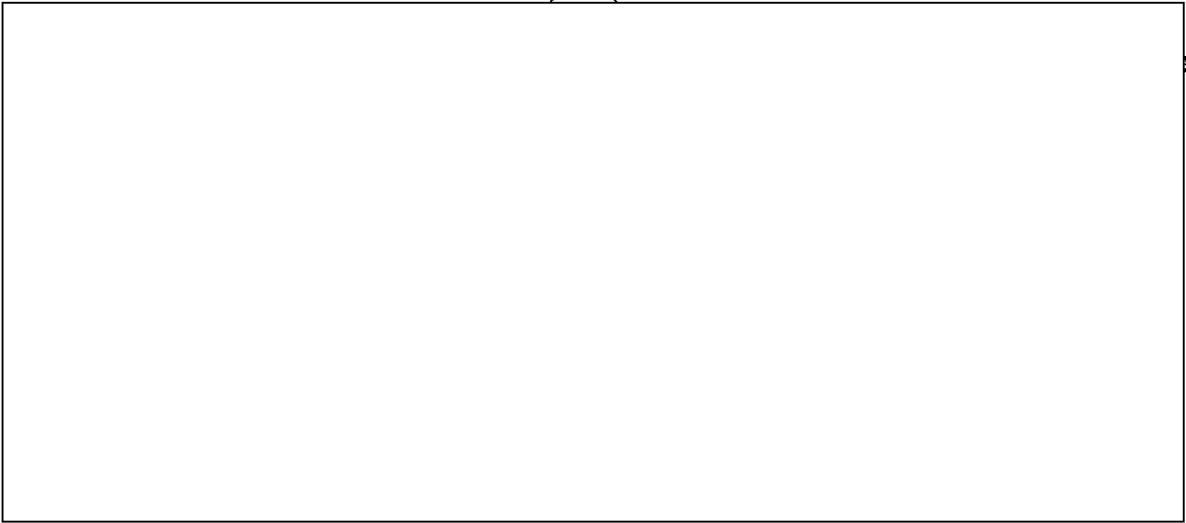

The present Soviet campaign follows a propaganda barrage of several months' duration against Anglo-American "imperialism" and the allegedly hostile designs of "reactionaries" in the United States and Britain. During this period the emphasis of Soviet attacks, which had been directed chiefly against Britain in an apparent attempt to drive a wedge between that country and the United States, shifted to equally strong denunciations of both countries. Increasing emphasis has been placed upon US designs for bases throughout the world and President Truman's labor policy has been played up as indicating a "reactionary" domestic trend in keeping with US "imperialism."

These attacks are a logical development of the basic Soviet contention that the USSR is "encircled" by hostile "capitalist" powers. Temporarily abandoned during World War II, the slogan of "capitalist encirclement" was revived immediately on the conclusion of hostilities.

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It was strongly emphasized in the election speeches of Soviet officials last February and found its most violent post-war expression in the Soviet reaction to Churchill's speech at Fulton, Missouri. The USSR will continue to use the same slogan to attack any joint resistance by the Western Powers to Soviet policy and to justify any future Soviet moves to enhance the "security" of the USSR.



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The Azerbaijan Settlement

Premier Qavam's success in reaching an agreement with Azerbaijani leaders on the terms which he originally proposed is qualified by the established presence of Soviet elements in Azerbaijan and the concessions which he has been compelled to make to the Soviet-supported Tudeh Party in the rest of Iran. The settlement, which, according to Azerbaijani leaders, was finally concluded on Soviet orders, represents a modification of the previous stand of the Soviet-supported "Democrats." The Azerbaijani "Army" is to be incorporated into the Central Iranian Army, land distribution and internal reform are to be carried out according to Qavam's proposals, the Azerbaijani have officially given up their bid for "autonomy," and Qavam is free to carry out his professed ambition to restore them to full allegiance to Tehran.

Qavam, however, will be hindered in his efforts to develop a unified and genuinely independent Iran by the presence of Soviet officers and men in key positions in the Azerbaijani "Army" and police, and by the growing power of the leftist Tudeh Party in the rest of Iran. In order to better his position in negotiations with the USSR, Qavam recently has played up to the Tudeh Party and has carried out severely repressive measures against conservative elements.

In the last analysis, however, Qavam's future success in maintaining Iran's independence will depend upon great-power policy. The Soviets appear to have recognized that their recent Iranian policy, while accomplishing its immediate military and economic objectives, was heavy-handed and over-hasty. Qavam's skill in mobilizing Iranian resistance and in exploiting world opinion through the UN apparently helped to convince the Soviets that gradual penetration (employed so effectively in Sinkiang) would succeed better. Accordingly, with their oil and military objectives assured, the Soviets could afford to withdraw full support from the Azerbaijani "Democrats." Moreover, the Soviets clearly feel that "time is on their side" in Iran and that the general economic backwardness of the country and the unpopular labor policy of the British oil companies will forward their cause.

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